



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

February 17, 2012

Memorandum To: Jay Bennett, PE
David Chang, Ph.D., PE
Dewayne Sykes, PE
Njoroge Wainaina, PE
Greg Thorpe, Ph.D.
Virgil Pridemore

From: Deborah M. Barbour, PE *Deborah Barbour*
Director of Preconstruction

Subject: Project Development Streamlining Initiative – Scoping Implementation

NCDOT, FHWA, along with other federal and state Resource Agencies have established a goal to improve the Merger Process. After reviewing the established Merger Performance Measures, it appeared there was an opportunity to streamline the process by reducing the time between concurrence points, especially in the beginning phases of project development. One of the results of this streamlining review has been the development of a new approach to scoping projects. Based on the results of three recent pilot projects that tested the new scoping procedures, I have decided to begin a phased implementation of the improvements to the early scoping process and make the process mandatory. By June 2012, we will begin utilizing the new scoping procedures on all centrally managed R, U, I, and W projects.

A review of our Merger Process performance data has shown that, on average, it can take as long as 24 months to reach concurrence on a project's purpose and need (Concurrence Point 1). It is our intent to reduce this time by re-vamping the way we scope projects. The new scoping approach is comprised of two elements: internal scoping with transportation personnel and external scoping with our agency partners. The focus of the new approach is to confirm the basis of the project, identify the real issues that will most influence the project, and then plan the project work needed to address those issues. We will be relying more on history and data from long range planning that relate to the project's origins and we will involve resource agencies earlier in the scoping process. Our expectation is that this approach will result in a more efficient and effective use of our collective time. It will also enable us to further customize the project development timeline based on the project scope and will help us to more readily identify the specific work products needed to address the issues and concerns.

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Members of your staff as well as staff members in other areas across the Department are vital to this process and bringing and sharing information from their respective areas will help us to start the project development process in a more informed manner. Therefore, I am asking that you share this memo with them and express the importance of this process. Also, we will be involving various staff members in your area as well as other areas across the Department in training as follows:

- We are currently identifying upcoming projects that will follow the new scoping process. This project list will drive the training schedule.
- Training will be conducted throughout 2012 and classes will be scheduled so employees are trained in time to be prepared for scoping meetings, but not too far in advance of actually using the new procedures. Resource agencies will be included in the training.
- We have begun holding discussion sessions with groups of personnel throughout NCDOT to share more details about this change and to address questions or concerns. This will provide a basic foundation of the new scoping approach.
- I will also be providing an update regarding these streamlining efforts to the Interagency Coordination Team on March 15, 2012. You will be sent a webinar link to enable you to listen to the update.

In addition, the Schedule Management Office has been involved with the Streamlining Initiative and will work with each project group as needed to adapt and customize project schedules to the new process. I appreciate your support and your staff's support as we begin the new scoping procedures. Please contact me or Karen Capps if you have any questions regarding this information.

DMB/kc

cc: Terry Gibson, PE
Susan Coward
Victor Barbour, PE
Jon Nance, PE
Kevin Lacy, PE
Ricky Greene, PE
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